



TICKLE GRASS

BY BYRON WILLIAMS

A Queen of Palmistry.

There was a church fair in the old skating rink and half the town of Highland was in attendance. Seemingly not a chance to swell the treasury of the society had been overlooked, and tempting maidens, with rosy cheeks, were everywhere hypnotizing the male portion of the audience into "taking chances" on everything, from a baby-cab to "the hand-somest man in the house."

In a remote and darkened corner of the great building, a large placard announced in large, flaring letters that Madame Forenselli, the queen of palmistry, having come all the way from Chicago, would "analyze life through the language of the hand" for 50 cents an analysis.

The black curtains were drawn closely about the Madame's adyta, within which a small oil lamp, the flame almost extinguished and covered with a smoked chimney, cast a weird, uncanny light. Madame Forenselli, her face masked and dressed in a long robe of black and red, and from the garment ornaments of foreign black-art hung like fetiches of magic. About her neck was suspended a circle of serpents' fangs, and on her fingers she wore strange gems that glinted.

Seated on a chair before her was a young man of twenty-six years, dark and handsome. Bending over his hand she scrutinized the lines sharply.

"You have large and strong hands, hence are capable of details," she said in a low, pure voice, with a foreign accent.

The Madame drew her chair a bit closer and placed a well-shaped hand over the fingers held in her left palm. Bending low over the hand she said with an effort: "You are in love—"

The young man started perceptibly, while a blush mantled his dark cheek.

"But do not marry the small woman with pointed fingers. She is beautiful and accomplished, and you may think you love her, but your natures are not compatible. Your heart is large and knows no boundaries. She will fret and worry you—and you will tire of her."

The Madame felt the hand within hers twitch nervously. Her voice trembled perceptibly as she continued rapidly:

"This long line bespeaks an excess of tender love. Some ideal you think you have lost, but you are in error. She has not passed from your life. She loves you with a pure and lasting love that time cannot efface."

As the Madame spoke thus a tremor passed through the body of the man opposite her, and the woman felt the warm blood surge even to his fingertips.

"Proceed, Madame," he said, striving to be calm, his voice harsh and strained.

"This beautiful love crossed your path and set all nature to singing when you were just passed into man's estate. The parting almost broke your heart and hers."

"For neither ever found another To ease the hollow heart from pining."

"You have tried to be manly, sought to forget the past and to blot from memory with pride and false affection the image of one toward whom your love will never die. You have not forgotten, you can not forget. There is only a deceit of self, for without Anita—"

"Enough! Enough!" cried the young man in agonized tones. "My God, woman, enough!" He sprang up like one stricken with some sudden grief greater than human can endure, while the pain in his heart was portrayed in his face, set and ghastly.

Quickly tossing Madame Forenselli a coin, he hurried from the booth and the building. Memory was pouring aloe into the old wound. Hurriedly he slipped into a side street and walked as in a dream toward the river. Down on the grassy bank he threw himself, his face buried in his hands. In his brain there surged a ferment of regret. Fool that he had been to lose the pleasure of his life who that life was scarce begun! Now she had gone from him; for three long years he had not seen her. She had traveled—and yet she loved him!

No, she did not love him. Why should this woman, this Madame Forenselli, know aught of the love of a heart so chaste? No; it was only a ghost of the past to destroy his peace again, when he was striving so hard to forget her.

Voices aroused him. Two glowing coils of fire apprised him that strolling smokers from the fair were wandering on the river's brink. He almost hated them for breaking in upon his grief. He could hear their voices plainly now. They were near him.

"By the way," one was saying, "did you know the fortune teller, Madame Forenselli, at the fair to-night?"

"Some woman from Chicago, the bills said."

"Chicago, bah! That was Anita Beughnon, Ward Leighton's old flame. She came home unexpectedly from three years in Europe this morning and the girls thought—"

But the man lying prostrate in the grass by the river side heard no more, for a great joy had come into his heart. The moon, peeping from behind a cloud in the heavens, looked down upon him with her silvery light and smiled.

RECLAMATION OF DESERT.

Good Work Goes on with Certainty of Ultimate Success.

The desert is commonly considered a forbidding place, and numerous difficulties are encountered in the endeavor to make it "blossom as the rose." A dweller on the Mojave says that "with plenty of land ready for the plow, it took three of us sixteen months to raise enough to feed two horses continuously." The alkali was death to almost everything, and even a liberal irrigation would not cause the bloom to come. Wherever a sprig of green appeared the rabbits would appear also and sweep the board.

While this was the industrial situation, the comforts of life were illustrated by the winds, which blew strenuously for days at a time, and, of course, the heat was intense. Under the influence of the searching atmosphere the melons of a sickly garden

WARS COST 14,000,000 LIVES.

Prof. Charles Richet Recounts Marital Tragedies of Nineteenth Century.

Prof. Charles Richet, the noted French apostle of peace, is quoted as saying that during the nineteenth century 14,000,000 human beings died in consequence of war.

"Napoleon," he said, "is usually credited with having caused the death of 2,000,000 men. As a matter of fact, 8,000,000 men died for his glory. The war of the Crimea cost 300,000 lives, the American civil war 500,000. Prussia doomed 800,000 men to death between 1860 and 1871, the Russo-Turkish war 400,000.

"The wars in the South American republics are generally laughed at," continued the professor, "but as a matter of fact they are far from ridiculous. In the nineteenth century they cost, all told, 500,000 lives, and the South American republics are not

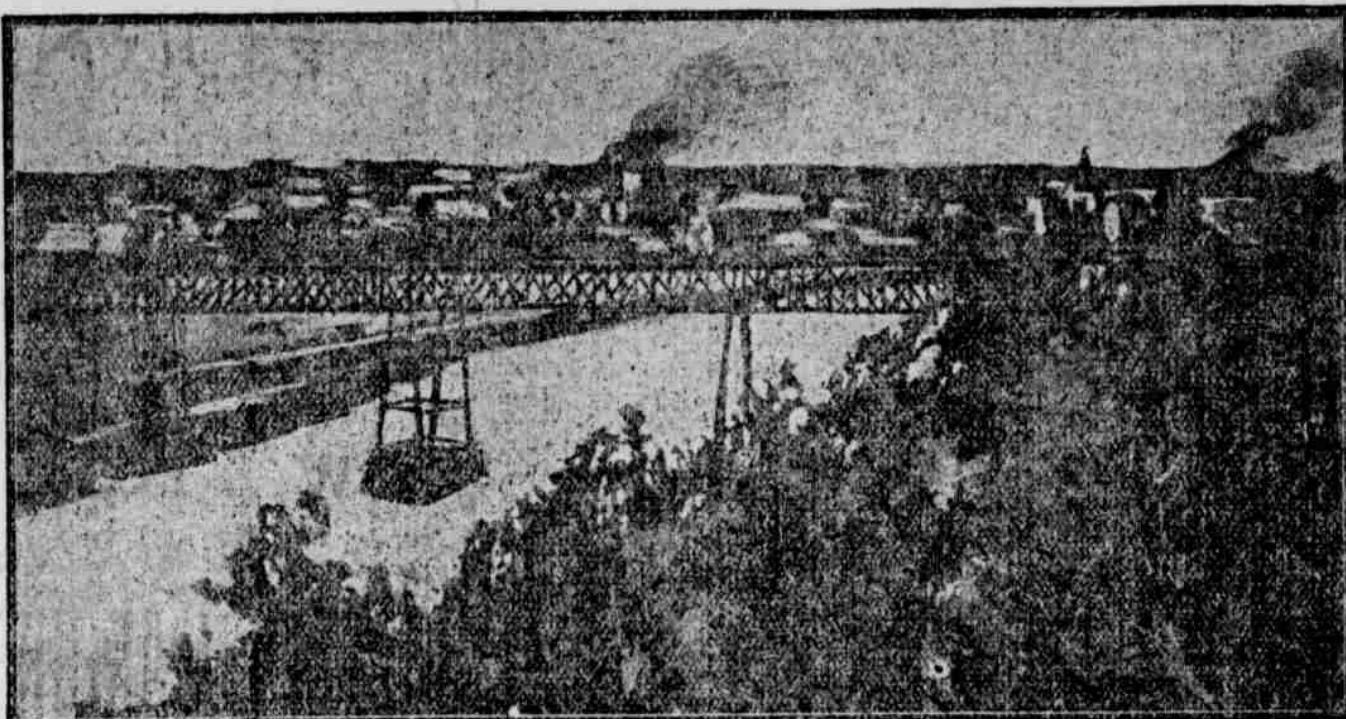
THE WORLD'S WHEAT CROP.

Estimates Show a Reduction in Almost All Countries.

Estimates of the wheat crop put the total yield of this country at 533,000,000 bushels. This would indicate a reduction from the yield of last year of about 100,000,000 bushels, while the figures are more than 200,000,000 below those of 1901 and more than 130,000,000 below those of 1902. It should be noted, however, that they come pretty close to those of 1900 and 1899, being slightly in excess of the one and slightly below the other, and that only twice before 1899 did the crop amount to as much as 600,000,000 bushels.

But again, while this is true, it is to be noted also that there is not a falling off merely, but a very serious loss owing to unfavorable weather conditions. Earlier expectations have been disappointed and, furthermore,

DESTRUCTIVE WORK OF THE STORM AT MINNEAPOLIS.



St. Paul City and High Bridge, which Was Wrecked.

simply dried up, standing up stiff in all the pride of life," and the sweeping sand carried on an unceasing assault upon every visible object. With one side of the picture thus revealed, hopes of reclamation would die, and it would seem incredible that any one should attempt to maintain the discouraging fight against such odds.

It is a fact, however, to which this very witness testifies in the Los Angeles Times, that the battle continues, and that, too, with prospects of ultimate success. Human intelligence finds a way to combat all the enemies that are supplied in nature and to derive aid from nature's gift of a rich soil. There can be no doubt that many vast tracts which now seem condemned to eternal barrenness will yield heavy crops in time and support a large population. The inducements for extensive irrigation schemes are sufficient to justify the efforts that are being made by individuals and state to bring these waste areas under cultivation.

Nor are the comforts of the desert life all summed up in the driving winds and sandstorms. One comes to enjoy the dry heat. "When it reaches 105 degrees you will hardly know or care when it goes five or ten more, and even another five or ten will not bother you very much. This is largely offset by the ease of sleeping outdoors, by the absence of fog, almost total absence of rain and the great number of lovely days in fall and winter." It is a subject for congratulation also that there are no fleas, no mosquitoes, no bedbugs. If alfalfa has its trials, flies and gnats have theirs, too, and preferably seek other climates.

In fine, what appears uninhabitable to those who pass on in ignorant repulsion and amazement is attractive, even fascinating, to those who understand all the conditions and who are doing the pioneer work. And if some of the latter may be carried too far by their optimism the country will derive its profit from their struggles.

Life's Most Important Act.

A magazine editor, seeking an increase of circulation, sent to each of his 3,500 subscribers this query: "What was the most important act of your life? Fifty dollars for the best true answer." He received more than 1,000 replies, all but one relating some particular deed of which the writer was proud. The exception—and prize winner—was brief and to the point—"Being born." Encouraged by the success of his scheme of advertising, the editor sent out a second query, offering another \$50 for the best answer. "Last month you stated what was the most important act of your life, now tell us what is the most important act of your life." The variety of replies would have made several pages of rare humor, but the winner solemnly wrote, "Breathing."

Authority on Penology.

Major R. W. McClaughey, warden of the United States penitentiary at Leavenworth, has just celebrated the thirtieth anniversary of his management of prisons. He was first appointed warden of a penitentiary in August, 1874. In the last thirty years he has been warden of three different penitentiaries and two reformatories. He was warden of the Joliet, Ill., penitentiary longer than any other. In the thirty years' service he has had about 24,000 prisoners under him. Major McClaughey has aided in the building of two prisons, and the work on the big new United States penitentiary at Leavenworth is being done under his supervision.

overburdened with citizens, are they? "I am sorry to say that the twentieth century bids fair to rival the nineteenth century in the killing line."

QUAY GAVE UP STAKES.

"Joe" Cannon's Singing Voice Too Much For Pennsylvania Senator.

The late Senator Quay circulated a story wherein Speaker Cannon is represented as a singer. The occasion was a political banquet where a discussion arose over the song, "The Old Oaken Bucket." Senator Quay remarked: "I never heard it sung through in my life." "I will bet you a dollar that I can sing it through," asserted Mr. Cannon. "Take you," said the senator. "And the toastmaster will hold the stakes and be referee." Mr. Cannon cleared his throat and attacked the famous old melody with grim earnestness. At the end of the first stanza Senator Quay got upon his feet and interrupted the song. "I wish to say, if I may be pardoned," he commenced, "that I dislike to lose a dollar, but I am willing to concede the stakes to my adversary and take his word for the accuracy of his knowledge if he will stop singing right where he is."

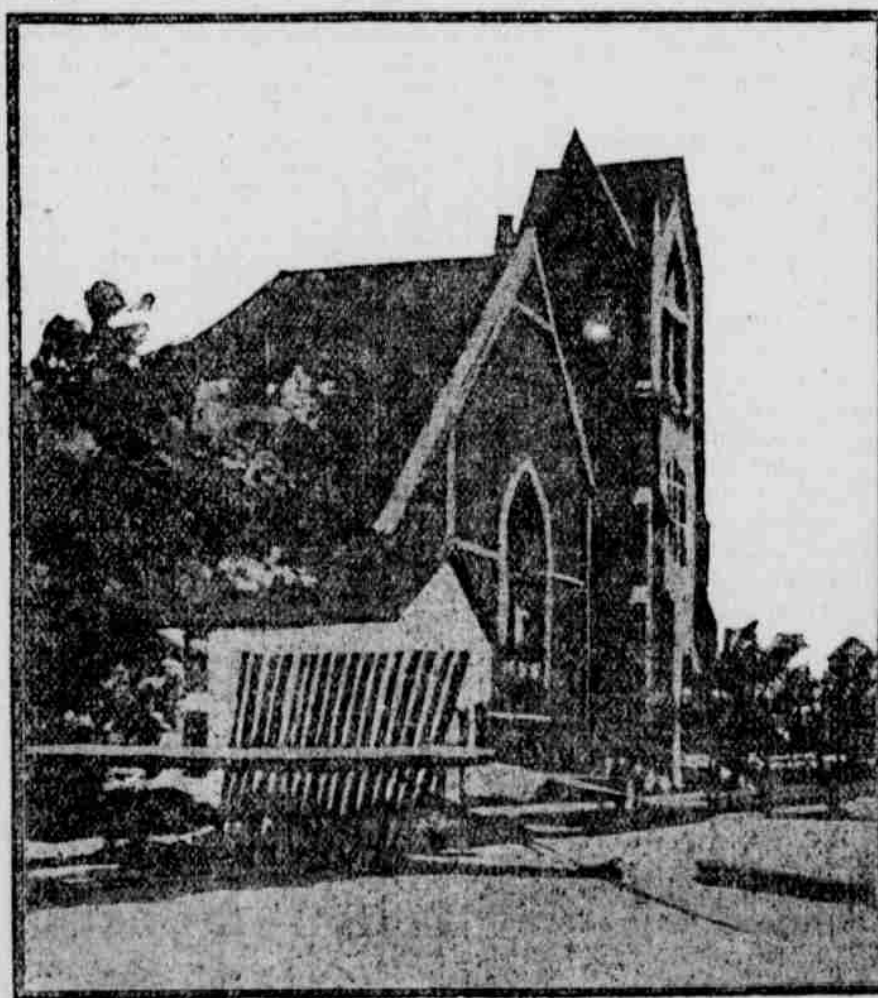
Arab Is 120 Years Old.

Perhaps the oldest man in the world is Sid Ahmed Salim, a wonderful relic of the eighteenth century, who has long been one of the sights

reports indicate that there is a short crop in many countries. Canada has been hit like the United States, the estimates in Manitoba being reduced by one-half. We learn also from a general review in the London Economist that the English crop will be much below the average, and that of the entire United Kingdom a meager one. In France there will be a reduction of about 33 per cent from the yield of last year. Austria-Hungary, Spain, Italy, Roumania and Russia are all sufferers. Damage by drought has seriously affected the prospects in the Argentine, and India seems to furnish the only marked exception to the generally discouraging returns. Her crop of last spring was 352,000,000 bushels, the largest in her history, and The Economist says: "If wanted in Europe, India, accordingly, has an enormous surplus, which would be attracted by a moderate advance in the price."

This surplus, however, is not large enough to make up the deficit in other countries, and it is certain that the world's crop will be the smallest produced in recent years. At the same time this country is fortunate in the prospect of a large yield of Indian corn. The estimate is 2,400,000,000 bushels, which would give a crop far above the average and second only to that of 1902.

Baron Rothschild Changes Politics. Nathan Meyer Rothschild, first



Norwegian Lutheran Church Damage to the Extent of \$5,000.

in Cairo, Egypt. He was born about 1784, his father having been a shiek of the Cairo tentmakers. Until a few years ago he could describe with every appearance of accuracy many of the stirring scenes he witnessed when Bonaparte was in Egypt with his army. Now, at the age of about 120, he is confined to his bed with extreme feebleness, having lost feeling in his extremities. Aged Arabs remember him as an old man when they were children. A great-granddaughter, herself getting along in years, looks after him.

Baron Rothschild in the peerage of Great Britain and head of the English branch of the celebrated family of bankers, has incurred the displeasure of the present ministry by transferring his political allegiance to the Liberal party. While the great financier has not much influence over votes by means of his territorial possessions, which are small when compared with a number of his fellow members of the house of lords, he commands a large amount of political influence not only in the city of London, but throughout the United Kingdom.



JACK AND JOLLY

Jack's Fatal Oversight.

"I like you well enough, Mr. Uxmal," said the perplexed young woman; "or, at least, I'm not sure I like you as well as I do Jack Cawdrey. He says he thinks of me 365 days in the year."

"He wants one day off every four years, does he?" exclaimed young Uxmal, with indignant scorn. "That kind of devotion doesn't commend itself to you, does it, Clarice?"

Jack's doom was sealed from that moment.

Headlight.



Edythe—How sweet the moon is! Why do you start so, Willie, when you look at it?

Willie—Er—why, you see, I've been knocked over by automobiles several times.

In Early Days.

Capt. Kidd had just lowered a chest of treasures into the sea, after carefully charting the spot.

"I suppose," he mused, as he watched the bubbles rise and float upon the water, "I suppose that one of those corporation pirates would call that my sinking fund."

Those who heard him afterward claimed that the captain was one of the pioneers in the watered capital game.

Wrong Remedy.

"Is it true," asked the caller, "that your husband ordered Dr. Smoother out of the house?"

"Yes. Poor Jack had been carrying the baby all night and every night for a week, and was run down to a thread. I called the doctor, and he told Jack that he must take exercise."—Detroit Free Press.

Failed to Make Good.

Miles—Did you ever read that wonderful book, "How to live a Hundred Years?"

Giles—Yes; the author was an old schoolmate of mine.

Miles—Indeed! Where is he now?

Giles—He died at the age of thirty-seven.

Safe for a While.

"It's funny," said the sick man's wife, "but the doctor says he hasn't discovered yet what's the matter with you."

"Thank heaven!" exclaimed the sick man, "then I'm safe for a while yet."

In the Blood.

Adelle—Clarence, don't you think you could overcome somewhat your fondness for your club?

Clarence—No that would be impossible. I inherit it from my mother. She was a club woman.

Leading Man.

Theatricals—When were you a leading man?

Foyer—When the company had to walk back from Chicago, and they selected me to show the way.—Town Topics.

Keeps It from His Wife.

Knicker—Is he modest?

Bocker—Very. He doesn't let his right hand know when he puts his foot in it.—New York Sun.

Irony.



Spick—She rules her husband with a rod of iron.

Span—I guess that accounts for my seeing her chase him with a poker this morning.

Had Him Guessing.

"Come up to the house, and if you are fond of music, I'll have my daughter play and sing for you."

"What effect would that have on my fondness for music?"—Houston Post.

COST OF LOUIS' BUTTONS.

Grand Monarque Said to Have Squandered \$5,000,000 in This Way.

Twenty thousand dollars for a drop-shaped pearl scarfpin, \$15,000 for a pearl stud, \$4,940 for a coat fastener formed of a white bouton pearl with gold bar, \$850 for seven buttons en suite and \$775 for a pair of brilliant sleeve links—these are a few of the prices realized at the recent sale in London of a noble marquis' jewelry.

But, after all, everything is comparative, and the marquis' gems, rare and costly though they are, would have been quite eclipsed by Louis XIV's personal jewelry. The "grand monarque" had many crazes, but for buttons he had a positive mania. In a single year, 1685, he squandered \$600,000 on them, and some of his purchases are well worth glancing at.

On Aug. 1, 1685, he bought two diamond buttons for 67,966 francs and seventy-five diamond buttons for 586,703 francs. The buttons for a single "vest coat Louis" \$200,000. Of the 254 "boutonnieres" used 162 contained five diamonds each, while the remainder were single diamonds. In all, the "great monarque" is said to have spent \$5,000,000 on buttons alone.

SACRED SHRINE OF JAPAN.

Where Devotees Pray for Safety of Absent Ones.

A romantic custom of the Japanese is described in the "Kokoro" of Lafcadio Hearn. It is narrated that those who are anxious for the safety of absent ones repair to the mountain of Daikayama to perform a singular rite. There is a shrine at the summit to commemorate a princess of antiquity who daily watched hopelessly until she pined and died, when her body was changed into stone. One who looks with the eyes of a believer still sees the princess on Mount Daikayama in the shape of a perpendicular rock. Before her shrine are heaps of pebbles and those who ascend to pray for the safe home-coming of one they love take a pebble away with them as a talisman. And when at last reunited with the beloved another pilgrimage is made to the shrine on Daikayama to replace the pebble, with a handful of others, in devotional gratitude.

Balancing Accounts.

Now what do I owe you for all of this? For the summer's joy by wood and cliff? For the wooded nook and the stolen kiss? For the right and delights in the sea-bathing skiff? For the fingers, cool and pink and slim, entwined with mine, and the happy laugh? Come, what do I owe you, O maiden trim? But, remember, of all of it you had half.

Now what do I owe you, O maiden sweet, For the moonlight walks down the shining beach? For the joys I knew on the driftwood seat? When we were afar and alone with each? Now what do I owe you for the look in your eyes? The nectar my soul leaped out to quaff? Come, whisper me, dear, how the balance lies. But, remember, of all of it you had half.

Now, what do I owe you? Take into account The pleasure it gave me to help you up. Up the scarred old cliff it was ours to mount: The pleasure it gave me to touch the cup Where your own red lips touched the dripping rim. And tell me, oh, tell me, and do not laugh, For the joy that shall last till life's light grows dim. But, remember, of all of it you had half.

—Houston Post.

Moses and Pharaoh.

Certain summer tourists visited a Highland church about five years ago, when the worthy clergyman chanced to be expounding the story of the destruction of Pharaoh and his host. His peroration was in these sublime words: "And Mossus and his people crossed over safely to the other side, but Pharaoh and his host were submerged in the water. And Pharaoh lifted up his eyes and saw Mossus standing safely on the other side, and he cried and said, 'Oh, Mossus, safe me!' But Mossus never let on that he was hearing him. And he cried again, and said, 'Oh, Mossus, safe me, and I will let the children of Israel go!' And Mossus turned and looked at him, and said, 'Pharaoh, I think I have seen you before.'"—Scottish American.

Snakes' Eyes Never Closed.

Snakes may almost be said to have glass eyes, inasmuch as their eyes never close. They are without lids, and each is covered with a transparent scale, much resembling glass. When the reptile sheds its outer skin the eye scales come off with the rest of the transparent envelope out of which the snake slips. This glassy eye scale is so tough that it effectually protects the true eye from the twigs, sharp grass and other obstructions which the snake encounters in its travels, yet it is transparent enough to allow the most perfect vision. Thus, if the snake has not a glass eye, it may, at any rate, be said to wear glasses.

Little Nutrient in Strawberry.

The Lancet, ever keen in its task of disillumination, analyzes the strawberry to show its lack of nutritive value. The analysis is as follows: Water, 89.500 per cent; soluble salts (including free acid), 1.146; lime and iron salts, 137; proteid, .800; sugar, .5800; oily matter, .354; cellulose and seeds, 2.463. The strawberry is consumed rather for the sake of its moisture, sweetness and flavor than for any value that it may possess as a food and, according to analysis, this value